LETS EXPLORE LABUAN!

where culture, nature, and stories meet.

Do's in Traveling

Find out the things you can do while travelling at Labuan.

Culture & Food

Enjoy breathtaking culture and delicious food that Labuan has to offer.

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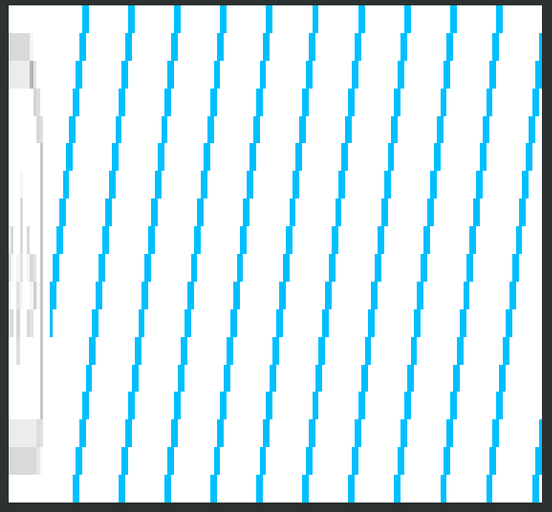
INTRODUCTION



Labuan became a Federal Territory on 16 April 1984 and is located about 8 km off the west coast of Borneo, consisting of 29 villages. Originally part of the Sultanate of Brunei, Labuan was ceded to the British in 1846 and known as Victoria Island. It later joined North Borneo (1946) and became part of Malaysia in 1963. Major development followed its designation as a Federal Territory, especially after being recognised as an International Offshore Financial Centre (IOFC) in 1990. The main population groups are Kedayan and Brunei Malay, with a Chinese minority. Key attractions include Peace Park, war graves, the Exotic Bird Park, and marine sports activities. Labuan is also home to Universiti Malaysia Sabah Labuan International Campus (UMSKAL).

History & Heritage

MUSUEM CHIMNEY

The Chimney Museum (Muzium Chimney) highlights the history of Tanjung Kubong and Labuan's coal mining industry (1847–1911).

The Chimney Monument, locally called "Punil," is a 32.5-metre brick structure built in the late 1890s without modern piling. Its original function remains unknown, with theories suggesting it was used for mine ventilation, smelting, a lighthouse, telecommunications, or as a coal-mining landmark. It underwent major conservation from 1997–1999 and won the International Green Apple Award (Bronze) in 2013.

The two-storey museum, inspired by colonial-era architecture, was completed in 2000 and officially opened on 26 October 2002. The ground floor covers Tanjung Kubong's history, coal mining, and early

PEACE PARK

Labuan Peace Park is located beside Surrender Point in Kampung Layang-Layangan, overlooking Labuan's western coast.

It is a World War II memorial commemorating Labuan's Japanese occupation (1941–1945) and the surrender to Allied Forces on 10 September 1945. Built and still funded by the Japanese, the park symbolises peace and remembrance for all who died in Borneo during the war.

CLOCK TOWER

The Labuan Clock Tower is a replica of the original tower built in 1906 by Chee Swee Cheng, the first chairman of OCBC Bank.

The original tower survived World War II bombardments but was demolished in 1948. It once stood on the town hall façade.

The replica was rebuilt in 2002 with funding from the Ministry of Tourism. Today, it chimes hourly and is illuminated at night.

GALERI LAWA

Galeri Kraftangan LAWA Labuan (Labuan Warisan Craft Gallery) is a cultural centre that promotes local arts and heritage.

It features traditional crafts such as Labuan batik (using sago starch), seashell and leaf-based designs, rattan weaving, Manik Vinusak necklaces, and local products like cold-pressed coconut oil.

The gallery also hosts live craft demonstrations by local artisans, giving visitors a hands-on cultural experience.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sago starch is a natural starch extracted from the sago palm, which grows widely in Borneo, including Sabah and Labuan. It has long been a traditional food and craft material among local communities.

TAMAN BOTANIKAL

Labuan Botanical Gardens is a scenic recreational park featuring tropical plants and flowers, including a hibiscus and herb garden.

Founded by Sir Hugh Low, a former Colonial Secretary of Labuan, the gardens are located on the site of an old Government House built in 1852. The area is linked to various local folklore, especially stories from Borneo's headhunting era.

Key features include lush landscaping, majestic trees, and an arched bridge over a man-made lake.

LABUAN WAR CEMETERY

The Labuan War Cemetery is the largest World War II cemetery in Malaysia, containing over 3,900 graves. It commemorates those who died in the Battle of Borneo (1941–42), the Borneo Campaign (1945), and the Sandakan–Ranau Death Marches.

A Remembrance Day ceremony is held annually on 11 November (or the nearest Sunday).

Key memorials include the Labuan Memorial at the main entrance and the Labuan Cremation Memorial, which honours 34 Indian Army soldiers cremated according to religious rites.

LEARN MORE

MUSUEM LABUAN

DATARAN LABUAN

The Clock Tower: The square's most recognizable feature is the prominent Labuan Clock Tower. This landmark is a popular spot for photos and helps anchor the centre of the town.

Nature & Adventure

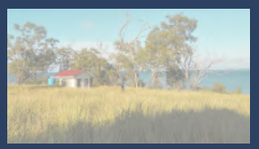
Pantai Layang-Layangan, officially known as Layang-layangan Beach, is a popular and serene coastal attraction located on the north-eastern side of Labuan Federal Territory in Malaysia. It faces the vast South China Sea.

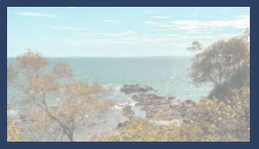
It is known for its soft, clean, white sandy beach and is a favoured spot for locals and tourist seeking a relaxing, family-friendly outing. The shoreline is graced with casuarina and coconut trees.

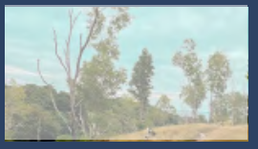
The beach is undergoing a revitalisation project aimed at upgrading amenities and enhancing its appeal for tourism.

Bukit Chimey is a location in Labuan that is predominantly known as the site of the famous Labuan Chimey and the surrounding Chimney Historical Complex in Tanjung Kubong.

Recommendation: Wear comfortable hiking shoes, bring water, and be prepared for the slightly moderate walk to explore the whole trails loop (around 3-4km).







CULTURE

KEDAYAN BRUNEI

LABUAN CUISINE

AMBUYAT

Ambuyat is a culturally significant dish in Labuan, especially among the Kadayan Brunei, and is a staple food in Borneo. It is made from sago starch mixed with boiling water, creating a thick, translucent, glue-like texture with a very mild taste. Ambuyat is traditionally eaten without chewing, using a two-pronged bamboo stick called a candas. The dish relies on its accompaniments for flavor, particularly dipping sauces (cacah) such as cacah binjai, sambal belacan, and sambal tempoyak. It is usually served with fish, seafood, and leafy vegetables, making the meal both communal and culturally rich.

IKAN KILING

Ikan Liking is a distinctive salted fish delicacy popular in Labuan, with origins in Kota Belud, Sabah, where it is traditionally made by the Bajau and other indigenous groups. Due to close cultural ties, it is well loved in Labuan cuisine.

Made mainly from ikan talang (queenfish), the fish is heavily salted and cured, sometimes lightly fermented, giving it a strong aroma and a rich, savory umami flavor that is more intense than regular salted fish.

In Labuan, Ikan Liking is commonly enjoyed as nasi goreng ikan liking, simply fried until crispy, or stir-fried with chili and aromatics. It is best eaten in small amounts with plain rice.

FESTIVAL

BORNEO FLORAL FESTIVAL (BFF)

The Borneo Flora Festival (BFF) 2025 was held from 26–30 July 2025 at the Labuan International Sea Sports Complex. Organised by Perbadanan Labuan, it aims to promote environmental awareness, eco-tourism, and Borneo's rich biodiversity.

The festival showcased over 200,000 tropical plants, themed gardens, and rare Borneo flora such as orchids and pitcher plants. It also featured cultural performances, local crafts, food stalls, and educational talks on conservation. The Borneo Flora Festival (BFF) 2025 is a major annual event in Labuan, held from 26–30 July 2025 at the Labuan Sea Sports.

BORNEO ART FESTIVAL (BAF)

The Borneo Arts Festival (BAF) 2025 was held from 13–17 November 2025 at the Labuan International Sea Sports Complex, with the theme "Warisan Seni Borneo."

The festival celebrated the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Borneo through traditional and contemporary performances, visual and installation art displays, ethnic villages, fashion showcases, and local handicrafts. It also featured Bornean food stalls and attracted visitors from Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia, strengthening Labuan's role as a regional cultural hub.

THANK YOU FOR READING!

Read Again?

In conclusion, we hope this book has sparked your interest and curiosity to visit Labuan. With its rich history, vibrant culture, unique cuisine, and beautiful natural attractions, Labuan offers an experience that is both meaningful and memorable. We look forward to welcoming you to discover and enjoy the charm of Labuan for yourself.

More info

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